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Report of
Extension Administrative Conference
on

Expanding Marketing Educational Progress * JUL 29 1954 * The part of agriculture

Chicago, III., May 21-27, 1954

United States Department of Agriculture Federal Extension Service Washington D.C.

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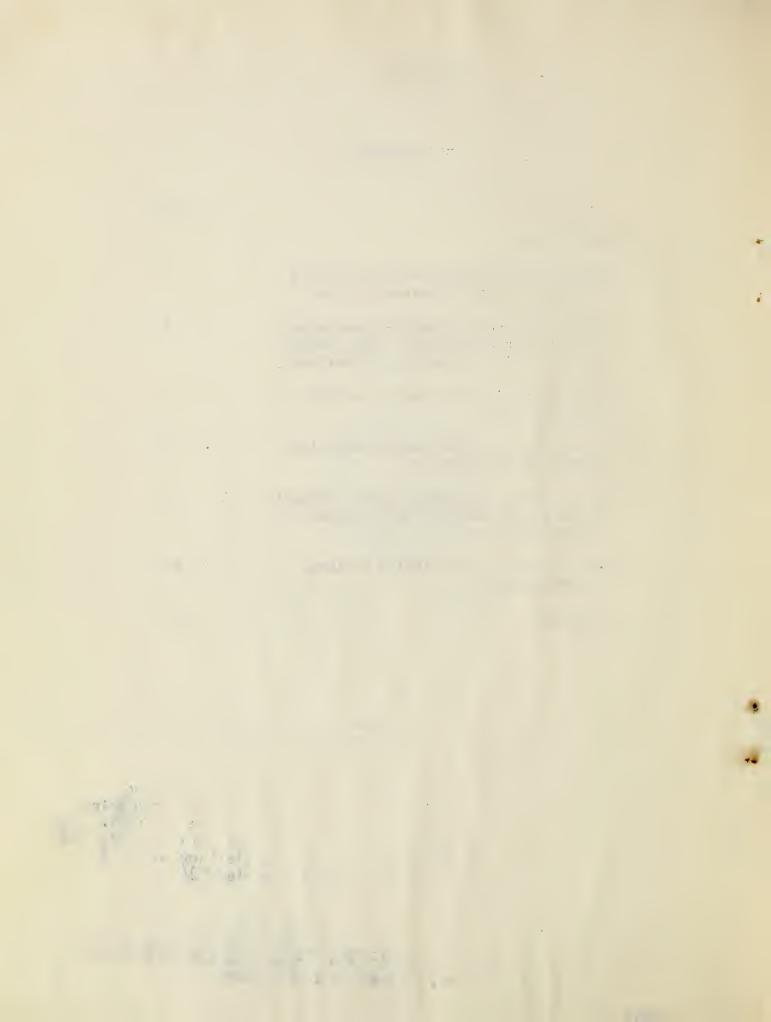
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REPORT OF EXTENSION ADMINISTRATIVE CONFERENCE Chicago, Ill., May 24-27, 1954

Introduction

Marketing and utilization of agricultural products are now receiving more attention and there is a growing demand for more work to be done toward improvement of the handling and distribution of agricultural products from the farm to the final consumer.

Research and education programs devoted to the improvement of the production of agricultural products have contributed a great deal in reduced costs to the farmer and the public, and there is no question that the work has paid for itself many times over. Many leaders now believe there is need for greater concentration or our research and educational programs on marketing and utilization problems where opportunities exist for making improvements, and favorable results should be secured.

Marketing of agricultural food products alone is a big business, amounting to approximately 24 billion dollars annually. In the relatively short time since 1929, farm marketings have increased 60 percent. The demand for more services has grown so that at present nearly 5 million people are employed in food marketing.

Costs involved in assembling, processing, storage, transportation, wholesaling, retailing, and other marketing services now amount to more than half of the consumer's total food bill. With the trend toward more marketing services, it is important that more attention be given to increasing efficiency in marketing.

In fact, it was these conditions that led up to the passage of the Research and Marketing Act of 1946, which gives research and extension a very definite responsibility to do more work in marketing. With additional funds, the Federal and State Extension Services, with a core of personnel who had been engaged in marketing educational work for many years, accelerated their efforts in developing programs dealing with specific problems.

At the outset it was realized that Extension's efforts should go beyond working with the farmer and would be most effective only if emphasis was placed on educational work with handlers and consumers as well. While work with handlers and consumers had been done for many years, the real challenge to the Extension Service was recognized and stated in a report, "Marketing Challenges the Extension Service."

^{1/} A statement prepared by a committee of State Directors of Extension and Deans of Agriculture, Chicago, Ill., Oct. 1950.

"Extension recognizes its responsibility for a complete and balanced educational program in marketing and distribution. In order to bring about the greatest efficiency in the production, distribution, and utilization of farm products, the present educational program in marketing will have to be greatly expanded."

Since the passage of the Agricultural Marketing Act, 118 marketing projects involving educational work with producers, handlers and consumers, have been developed in 42 States and 2 Territories. In addition, there are 3 regional commodity marketing projects. There are, also, 6 marketing projects under contract with land-grant colleges and universities, 2 dealing essentially with retailers and 4 with consumer education programs in marketing on an area or regional basis.

With the further experience gained in conducting educational programs in marketing during the past few years and with the growing demands that more be done in marketing, Directors of Extension believed that a national conference on marketing was needed at this time to establish certain principles of operation and administrative practices to be considered in further expanding the work. Accordingly a conference for directors was organized to concentrate on the administrative phases of developing a sound constructive extension program to meet the need.

The conference included both the viewpoints and suggestions of administrators of the major agencies of the U. S. Department of Agriculture concerned with marketing and examples of successful work being carried on in the State land-grant college. A significant part of the conference was devoted to the preparation of reports outlining policies dealing with different phases of extension marketing work.

It was the consensus of the directors present that definite administrative attention and support must be given to the field of marketing.

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L. A. Bevan, Chairman

Extension Marketing Committee

ORGANIZING AND ADMINISTERING MARKETING PROGRAMS OF THE EXTENSION SERVICE

Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson has stated: "The basic long-range needs of American agriculture are to reduce costs, to improve quality, and to expand markets. The sound approach to every one of these needs is through research and education."

The Extension Service recognizes and accept the responsibility for developing, organizing, and conducting a comprehensive educational program in marketing, recognizing the following principles:

- 1. The Cooperative Extension Service is the educational arm of the United States Department of Agriculture and the land-grant colleges that reaches non-campus people through their historic, legal and cooperative relationship.
- 2. In the development of marketing programs, strong administrative support and leadership are essential. This is important because the team approach in solving marketing problems must be followed, bringing to bear the technical know-how from many subject-matter fields. Thus, Extension, with specialists in the biological and physical sciences as well as in economics, can work effectively on many facets of marketing problems.
- 3. Responsibility for developing extension marketing programs in the States should be vested in one person responsible to the extension director.
 - 4. The extension marketing program should be made an integral part of the over-all extension program and correlated and coordinated with production work.
 - 5. In general, programs should be handled through county extension agents. The committee recognizes, however, that there are areas where it may be necessary to develop programs directly from the college or with special extension agents located in market areas.
 - 6. Representatives of the trade, farm organizations, and consumers should be involved in program building. This may be done either by formal committees or by informal contacts.
 - 7. Provision should be made to adequately evaluate and report marketing work.

8. Marketing programs of the Extension Service should be coordinated with research and carried on in cooperation with other agencies in the State and in the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Committee: D. B. Varner, chairman - Michigan Clay Lyle - Mississippi

A. Perez-Garcia - Puerto Rico
C. B. Ratchford - North Carolina
C. M. Ferguson - Washington, D. C.

P. O. Davis - Alabama
L. R. Simons - New York

R. C. Scott - Washington, D. C.

RELATIONSHIPS AND TEAMWORK IN MARKETING EDUCATION WITH RESEARCH OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES, AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

Four parts to the problem of relations and teamwork are:

- 1. Relations within Extension
- 2. Relations within the college and institution
- 3. Relations with other government and quasi-government agencies
- 4. Relations with producers, marketing agencies, processors, wholesalers, retailers, labor and other phases of industry

Within Extension

Problems --

- 1. Getting each individual in the Extension Service to appreciate that the marketing problem is a challenge to the entire Service
- 2. Prevention of segmentation by conditioning the extension staff as a whole to recognize basic marketing problems.

Solution -- Definite statement of policy by the extension administrators and the appointment of coordinator to stimulate collective interest and activity. The promotion of teamwork by the proper selection and appointment of extension committees.

Within the College or Institution

Problem -- To secure teamwork within the colleges, including the experiment station and teaching staff, and with the staff doing related work within the institution as a whole.

Solution -- Director of agricultural extension service to initiate with the Dean plans for the development of suitable administrative machinery for consultation and coordination.

To provide for continuing interchange of ideas and the appointment of necessary committees.

To provide for necessary conferences and workshops to maintain understanding and interest in problems.

With Other Public Agencies

Problem -- To develop teamwork with other public agencies and to avoid conflict as well as duplication of effort.

Solution -- By making arrangements for necessary meetings with the cooperation of the leadership of all other agencies involved in marketing problems in the State.

With Industry and Producer Groups

Problem -- To develop intelligent cooperative relationships with business and producer groups to determine their needs and wants insofar as marketing educational programs are concerned.

Solution — Committees should be set up to deal with specific commodity marketing problems.

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Such committees should be encouraged to analyze problems and to advise and recommend plans and programs for consideration. It is suggested that these commodity committees be supplemented by an overall committee selected from the commodity committees.

Committee: W. V. Lambert, chairman - Nebraska

H. C. Sanders - Louisiana G. H. Starr - Wyoming Skuli Rutford - Minnesota George Lord - Maine

S. T. Warrington - Washington, D. C.

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ORGANIZING AND ADMINISTERING CONSUMER MARKETING WORK

We define consumer education as dealing with buying and utilization of agricultural products by ultimate consumers.

Since our market outlets depend to a great degree upon consumer information concerning goods and services available, and since large numbers of consumers are concentrated in urban and suburban areas, the information needs to reach these people.

Our committee considered seven different points which should enter into the development of marketing work with consumers. These points may fall short of a complete picture but we find it appropriate to suggest that every extension director give attention to each of these points as a basis for his operating plans. The illustrations given here deal with food but we believe they are generally applicable.

- 1. Area of operation must be defined and related to the type of food marketing information programs that will best serve the people. Large or small cities and State or regional programs are all possible. The type of program must of course be adapted to the area.
- 2. <u>Committees</u> can be very helpful in getting at the problems of consumers in the area. They can guide extension workers in the development of educational programs which will reach the public. Consumers, trade and communication people can help on such a committee.

Extension workers from the several related educational fields should be kept informed of the consumer marketing program and contribute to its development and operation. A small supervisory committee may be needed to work closely with the extension consumer marketing workers and a larger advisory committee to review the program and make suggestions periodically.

- 3. Finances for this marketing program should include county or other local funds for city or county programs, much the same as for other extension work. State funds are used to carry much of the program, especially for the early stages. Federal funds on a matching basis and under contract for regional programs are very important in developing this work.
- 4. Training extension personnel for this work stands out as one of the essentials in this program because it involves a wide range of information and a broad understanding of the public need for farm products. Farm background seems desirable; understanding of family needs, journalism, and public relations are essential; training in marketing and home management give the background for subject matter and the basis for preparation of marketing information. Nutrition is the starting point for family buying and thus takes a prominent place in this program, along with prices, supply, selection, care, and other marketing information.

- Although the food marketing extension workers must always have 5. the point of view of the consumer who is trying to buy food that will make a good diet for the family at reasonable prices, an important by-product of this work is better public relations for producers. A better understanding of the role played by farmers and handlers in making products available to the people leads to good will.
- Relationships are a clue to successful programs in food marketing work. The cooperation of other extension workers is needed both in the preparation and dissemination of this information. trade sources of information must also be developed. Communications must be such as to give widespread dissemination. calls for integration and coordination of staff workers for a united effort so that the best program may be developed. enlisting food editors, health and welfare workers, other agency representatives, and commercial interests in the program. It is not a one-man job.
- 7. The subject matter for this work includes the wide range of knowledge related to the marketing and buying of agricultural products. It involves some knowledge of household economics and of the commodities, including their nutritive value, supply and demand, price relationships, keeping quality, selection, and use. Specialists in marketing, home economics, and agricultural production and county extension agents can provide the consumer education worker with helpful technical information for use in this program.

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Committee: M. C. Bond, chairman - New York

A. W. Woodard - Tennessee

J. W. Burch - Missouri

N. E. Beers - Montana

J. O. Knapp - West Virginia

W. B. Wood - Ohio

C. Shanley - South Dakota

Gale Ueland - Washington, D. C.

E. A. Johnson - Washington, D. C. R. J. Penn - Wisconsin

ORGANIZING AND ADMINISTERING MARKETING WORK WITH DISTRIBUTORS

Since its beginning the Extension Service has been charged with the educational responsibility to supply people with information on agriculture and home economics.

A committee, meeting in Chicago in October 1950, gave special attention to the informational need of distributors. Their report and the present situation were reviewed.

Educational work with distributors deals with the activities of people who handle the product from the time it leaves the farm until it goes through the retailer into the hands of the consumer. We conceive of this work within the farmework of personal and immediate advantage to the market operator with resulting benefits to grower and consumer.

This work deals with grading and packing, handling practices, marketing organization, facilities, maintenance of quality, reduced wastes and costs of marketing, trade relations, use of market news and inspection, utilization of lower grade and surplus products, training of wholesale and retail personnel, and the overall operations of management.

A sound agricultural economy is dependent not only upon those people living on farms but also on all those handling, transporting, celling and using all types of agricultural commodities. Farmers are, therefore, concerned with the efficient handling of their products by wholesalers, retailers and their secondary suppliers. Since retailing functions often constitute on the average 50 percent of the marketing cost, retailers have been generally receptive toward assistance in this field.

Some points to consider in developing this work are:

- l. In order to carry on this work, it is desirable to have a minimum of one person on each State staff who can specialize in this field.
- 2. Such people should have training in business principles, with practical experience in the wholesale and retail fields and with a background in agriculture. They may be qualified to deal with business management and operational problems. Such specialists may work largely with trade, professional groups, and agricultural associations, and would coordinate their work with that of the entire extension staff and other organizations working in marketing.
- 3. In the larger metropolitan areas, personnel will need to be employed and organized to fit the local situation. It may be necessary to have a team of specialists in these areas.

- Extension activities can be complemented and supplemented by related work being carried on by the Office of Education and the Department of Commerce.
- At the retail level alone approximately 1 1/3 million people are employed in nearly half a million food stores. The magnitude of this enterprise indicates both the opportunities for productive work and the need to share responsibilities with representative trade interests in developing programs. In the financing of such extension work, it may be well to consider part of the support being from funds other than public sources.
- The initial work in merchandising agricultural products has been concerned principally with foods. However, this work should include all agricultural products. In the relatively few years that food merchandising programs with trade groups have been in operation, activities have been broadened from the initial training work in fresh fruit and vegetable merchandising to include other departmental commodities such as dairy, meats, poultry and groceries, as well as related principles and problems of business management, economic outlook, financing, and engineering practices.

Greater details of the development and emphasis of extension programs in this field are contained in publications supplied to the Directors by the Division of Agricultural Economics Programs.

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Committee: J. W. Dayton, chairman, Mass.

W. G. Kammlade - Illinois

H. L. Hildwein - New Mexico

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L. E. Hoffman - Indiana

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WAYS AND MEANS OF GIVING GREATER EMPHASIS TO WORK WITH HANDLERS IN THE COMMODITY MARKETING FIELDS

Definitions: "Handlers" - those individuals, firms, and organizations involved in the processing, movement, buying, selling, and merchandising of agricultural products between the producer and consumer. Included in the above are country buyers, transportation agencies, storage and warehouse operators, processors, wholesalers, retailers, and public and private market agencies and facilities. "Ways and means" - where greater emphasis will be exerted and methods employed to accomplish said objectives.

After defining "handlers," and deciding what the committee's job is, the following are stated as educational objectives of marketing work with handlers:

- 1. To assist handlers in bringing about an increased understanding of the marketing system (explaining and describing marketing functions, services, problems, etc., in all channels of marketing).
- 2. To assist industry individuals, firms, and organizations to recognize and to solve their own problems.
- 3. To assist handlers to profit through increased efficiency.
- 4. Disseminate market information, results of research, outlook, public affairs, etc.

Within the framework of the above-stated educational objectives, the following methods of approach, problems and limitations, were discussed as possible ways and means of devoting greater emphasis to work with handlers.

- 1. Marketing clinics, sponsored by Extension. This method of approach has been very successful with buyers, retailers, and producers. At these clinics, Extension Service presents research results of studies made and discusses problems of mutual interest.
- 2. Work with retailers is a specialized job and should not be undertaken unless we have well-trained people in this field.
- 3. Merchandising schools conducted with retailers have been very successful in some States. However, follow-up is a serious problem which somehow must be overcome. Some States need help in getting an educational program established for retailers.

We need a broad marketing educational program with retailers and wholesalers. Such a program may include educational assistance in connection with accounting, financing, management operations, taxes, personnel training and relations, store location, layout and design, and work methods, better equipment, check-out operation, packaging, procurement practices, etc. The business and institutional approach should be taken. This will involve a number of subject-matter disciplines, commodities, knowledge, and skills.

- 4. Commodity groups are asking Extension to assist with educational programs to increase consumption of various agricultural products, which involves a number of disciplines team approach. Most States got into retail training programs on a commodity basis, e.g., "How to increase apple sales." More work in improving merchandising techniques and practices at retail level should be undertaken, since it is at the retail level that greatest opportunities exist to reduce marketing costs.
- 5. Production specialists in commercial production areas long distances from markets should learn more about market needs and problems, and take these problems back to producers. Grades and qualities, varieties, packages, etc., are examples of some practices that may need changing because of market practices and trade and consumer preferences.

Extension should hold more short courses and workshops for trade groups. Training should be practical and aimed at pressing problems of trade.

How increased emphasis on work with handlers should proceed

Where additional emphasis is undertaken in work with handlers, every effort should be made to obtain qualified personnel. If trained, experienced personnel is not available, Extension should postpone additional activities until such time as adequately trained personnel is available or can be trained. We need personnel who can work with the trade, know the trade, and can gain the confidence of the trade. At same time, such personnel should be properly oriented in extension organization and procedures.

Extension should approach this job from the institutional as well as the business standpoint, incorporating sound economic principles, based on the concept of a private enterprise competitive economy.

If the greatest possible efficiency is to be effected with food handlers more emphasis must be given to the team approach, involving two or more disciplines and a number of commodities. This will involve the reorganization of many extension marketing programs in the States where projects are now planned and operated in a subject-matter or commodity department.

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If Extension marketing personnel are to render the greatest possible contribution in improving marketing efficiency, they must work with and understand the attitudes and philosophy of the tradespeople involved. In many cases, this may well necessitate extension marketing personnel being located in the market place rather than at the college.

Regional commodity marketing work should be considered in areas where problems cut across State lines.

The economic advantages of performing more marketing jobs and functions on farms should be continuously explored, especially during changing economic conditions.

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Committee: T. R. Bryant, chairman, Kentucky

N. N. Williamson, Texas

R. P. Davison, Vermont

J. M. Gwin, Maryland Maurice Soults, Iowa

W. H. Daughtrey, Virginia

R. L. Childress, Washington, D. C.

WAYS AND MEANS OF DEVELOPING REGIONAL MARKETING WORK

Preliminary to suggestions on ways and means of developing regional marketing work, the committee gave attention to reviewing the operating experience in this field and appraised the results thus far obtained. It was unanimously agreed that there is a need for marketing educational programs on a regional basis as well as on a State and local basis.

Major Areas of Work.

The problems of marketing in areas such as processing, handling, and distributing farm commodities go beyond State lines. There are three major related areas involved in doing effective educational work on marketing. Two of these deal with State and local problems and the third with regional and national problems.

First is the work with local producers, concerning harvesting, grading, packaging, hauling, and how to sell to best advantage. Second is work with local buyers, pronessors, shippers, and other related groups. Third is work with interstate, regional, and national agencies engaged in handling, processing, and distributing the products after movement from local producing areas. Today there are but few commodities whose marketing is a purely local matter. Modern transportation, packaging, and storing practices have resulted in highly developed marketing systems. This means that the solution of local problems is to a great degree dependent upon proper functioning of the whole system. In many instances, it will be of little value for one group of farmers or local buyers to try and develop improved practices unless such practices are accepted and followed by other producers, buyers, and handlers selling in the same markets.

Regional Aspects of Consumer Marketing.

In recognizing that there are regional aspects of marketing, processing, handling, and merchandising farm products, the committee also believes there are regional aspects of educational work on marketing with consumers. The increasingly large majority of Americans living in urban areas is placing more and more emphasis on regional and national distribution systems. The retail merchant serving the typical urban consumer is drawing his supplies from all over the nation. Producers in Florida, Texas, California, or Maine are all concerned about what goes on in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other cities. Effective consumer education work cannot be done on a local market basis, covering only products grown within the individual States. This means that consumer marketing programs should not be limited by State boundaries. This is especially true in light of the fact that about 30 percent of the nation's people live in 20 large metropolitan cities and about 85 percent of the population is classed as non-farm.

Experience Gained in Regional Marketing Projects.

During the past 5 years valuable experience has been gained from operating regional marketing projects. Two types have been developed. First are the regional commodity programs, such as for hard red winter wheat in the Southern Plains States. Second are the regional consumer education projects carried on under contract, such as in New York City, Boston, and Kansas City. Both of these types of projects have demonstrated the worth of the regional approach. There have been some problems, however, mainly the lack of clear understanding of objectives, which point out the necessity for joint planning, and mutual responsibility among the cooperating States and the Federal Extension Service.

Regional Approach Should Be Continued.

The committee recommends that the regional approach be continued and further developed as a part of an expanding extension marketing program. Definite criteria, organization procedure, and sound financing are needed for the success of regional marketing programs.

Criteria and Procedure Still Apply.

The Extension Marketing Committee at its meeting in June 1950 set forth the following criteria and organizational procedure which this committee feels is still generally applicable as a guide in developing regional programs:

- 1. Regional projects should be confined to commodities and marketing functions involving well-developed marketing systems operating in a uniform pattern over a large producing area or consuming area consisting of two or more States.
- 2. Regional projects should be limited to work on problems that are industry-wide and not subject to solution by work within the individual States.
- 3. Provision should be made for working with the large regional marketing agencies, terminal market operators, large processors, and wholesale distributing agencies on problems common to the particular industry or functions involved.
- 4. There must be sufficient research and experience available to indicate the specific problems on which regional effort can be concentrated.
- 5. Provision should be made for proper integration and coordination of the regional activity and what is being done in the individual States.

- 6. Personnel should be selected on the basis of the job to be done. Only well-trained and experienced personnel who can work with the trade groups and State people should be employed.
- 7. The need for regional work must be recognized by the groups affected before a project is undertaken.

Organization and Procedure.

Regional programs should be developed cooperatively by the Federal and State extension services and conducted in close coordination with State and local programs.

Effective organization and operation of regional commodity marketing projects, merchandising programs, and consumer marketing programs will vary according to area, commodity and problems.

Experience to date indicates that the Federal Extension Service should take the leadership in cooperation with the States in administering regional programs. The following organizational pattern is recommended as a guide for establishing and conducting regional programs.

- 1. Any State, group of States, or the Federal Extension Service may take the initiative in proposing a regional project.
- 2. Before a project is submitted for approval the State directors of extension in the States involved and the Federal Extension Service should agree on the type of program needed, the specific work to be done by the regional project leader, and the location of project headquarters.
- 3. Once the regional program is agreed upon, there should be a conference of the participating State directors, heads of cooperating agencies, representatives of trade and industry groups, appropriate State marketing specialists, supervisors and Federal Extension representatives to review and develop final operating plans and procedure and to assure common understanding of objectives. There should also be established a project committee composed of appropriate representatives of the participating States, the Federal Extension Service, cooperating agencies, and trade or consumer groups. A State director of extension should be chairman of this committee and the Federal Extension representative should act as secretary. This committee should serve as an advisory group in the operation of the regional program. The State director would serve as administrative adviser for the project and represent the cooperating States in the operation of the regional program.

Financing Regional Programs.

Because of the broad application of regional programs, it is recommended that such projects be financed primarily from Federal funds and administered by the Federal Extension Service in cooperation with the participating States. Although direct financing should be largely from Federal funds, the States should also share responsibility through furnishing office facilities, assistance in publications, assistance of State personnel, other related services, and administrative leadership in support of regional programs.

The principle has been generally accepted that regional marketing programs should be financed with Federal funds in line with the criteria and organizational procedure set forth above. This policy is being followed in all cases where two or more States are involved in a commodity program or where consumer education program is located in a large metropolitan area of two or more States. To date there are no provisions for Federal financing, except on a matching fund basis, of consumer education projects in large metropolitan areas located wholly in one State. The committee feels that further study and consideration should be given to ways and means of Federal financing of consumer marketing programs on a contract basis in the large intra-state cities as well as the interstate cities.

The committee believes that a handbook on regional programs should be prepared by the Federal Extension Service and the Extension Marketing Committee. This handbook should set forth methods and procedures for developing and establishing regional programs, establish criteria, and outline organizational and administrative procedures to facilitate effective regional work in both the commodity and consumer fields.

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Attendance

Extension Administrative Conference Chicago, Ill., May 24-27, 1954

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